

BRIDGING PAST AND PRESENT: VALUE FORMATION IN EDUCATION FOR GEN Z AND FUTURE WORKFORCES

by:

Shiela Marie S. Songco

Teacher III, Pablo Roman National High School

McCrindle (2025) observes that “schools are 19th Century institutions using 20th Century buildings to teach 21st Century students and we wonder why traditional education sometimes struggle to connect so, if they don’t learn the way we teach, then let’s teach the way we learn.”

Education has long been regarded as the backbone of national progress and social advancement. Today, the arrival of Generation Z in classrooms marks a turning point in shaping the future workforce. As digital natives who have grown up in a fast-paced, interconnected world, these students require approaches that go beyond conventional instruction. Preparing them for modern challenges demands intentional cultivation of critical skills, enduring values, and resilience. Such preparation ensures they can thrive in a workplace defined by flexibility, innovation, and collaboration.

It is commendable that many schools are shifting toward pedagogical models that position teachers as facilitators rather than sole authorities. Collaborative learning, authentic real-world applications, and activity-based strategies are increasingly integrated into classrooms. With these, the purposeful use of technology, emotional intelligence, and contextual relevance helps nurture learners who are not only academically capable but also socially responsible and prepared for the future. Managing Generation Z learners should not be seen as controlling them instead, it is about empowering, guiding, and equipping them for leadership in a dynamic and unpredictable global landscape.

While modern classrooms emphasize collaboration, technology, and innovation, traditional methods still provide a crucial foundation. Timeless qualities such as discipline, respect, and perseverance remain essential. When combined with contemporary priorities like creativity and emotional intelligence, these values enable students to grow into adaptable employees and leaders. This blending of heritage and progress highlights the importance of balancing tradition with innovation to build a resilient workforce.

It is in connection with the article written by Bawa (2025), Generation Z are tomorrow's workforce and leaders. To embrace skills-based hiring beyond borders and bridge the digital divide, we must create a resilient, inclusive workforce that's ready to meet tomorrow's challenges and opportunities head-on. This is how to make the future workforce for the next generation.

Historically, schools placed strong emphasis on character formation, instilling discipline, respect, and integrity. Though teaching often relied on memorization, repetition, and teacher authority, the values imparted during that era remain relevant. These lessons continue to benefit learners as they enter professional life, where ethical conduct and character are as vital as technical expertise.

The values shaped through traditional education—discipline that fosters reliability, respect that strengthens relationships, integrity that ensures ethical choices, responsibility that promotes accountability, and teamwork that enhances collaboration, these remain cornerstones of workplace success.

Even as classrooms today prioritize technology, collaboration, and innovation, the moral and ethical grounding of earlier approaches cannot be overlooked. When teachers purposefully blend foundational values with current competencies, they create graduates who are not only academically strong but also compassionate, resilient, and ready to contribute meaningfully to society.

Therefore, values formation is equally vital as technical competencies in preparing the future workforce. Respect, perseverance, and good character not only enhance professional skills but also build trust, resilience, and integrity that earn lasting regard in the workplace.

References:

Bawa, O. (2025, January 20). 3 ways to make the future of work work for Generation Z.

Retrieved from World Economic Forum:

<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/01/3-ways-to-make-the-future-of-work-work-for-generation-z/>

McCrindle, M. (2026). mccrindle. Retrieved from Generation Z at School:

<https://mccrindle.com.au/article/generation-z-at-school/>